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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT: Mello et al.

SERIAL NO.: 10/068,178

ART UNIT: 2839

FILED: 02/06/2002

EXAMINER: Nguyen, S. V.

TITLE: ELECTRICAL SPLICE CONNECTOR

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.: 003B.0031.U1(US)

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria VA 22313-1450

Information Disclosure Statement

(37 C.F.R. §1.97(d))

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Sir:

The following information is being disclosed to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office as information that may be material to the examination of the above-identified patent application.

A search report has issued in a counterpart foreign application (EP 03001370). The search report includes citation of art, which was previously not cited in the present U.S. patent application.

Copies of the art are enclosed with a Form PTO-1449 for the Examiner's use. A copy of the search report wherein these references were cited is also enclosed.

Each item of information contained in this Information Disclosure Statement was cited in a communication from a foreign patent office in a counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this Statement.

The filing of this Statement is not to be construed as a representation that a search has been made regarding the claimed invention (37 C.F.R. §1.97(g)) or that no other possible material information exists. In addition, the filing of this Statement is not to be construed to be an admission that the information cited in the Statement is, or is considered to be, material to patentability (37 C.F.R. §1.97(h)).

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Wilkes Beninati June 17, 2003
Christine Wilkes Beninati (Reg. No. 37,967) Date

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail on the date shown below in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner For Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria VA 22313-1450.

July 17, 2003
Date

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European
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Branch at
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Search
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Office européen
des brevets

Département à
La Haye
Division de la
recherche

Beetz & Partner
Patentanwälte
Steinsdorfstrasse 10
80538 München
ALLEMAGNE

Datum/Date
07.07.03

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|---|---|
| Zeichen/Ref./Réf 860-59.063EP/CM | Anmeldung Nr./Application No./Demande n°/Patent Nr./Patent No./Brevet n° 03001370.0 |
| Anmelder/Applicant/Demandeur/Patentinhaber/Proprietor/Titulaire FCI | |

COMMUNICATION

The European Patent Office herewith transmits

- ☒ the European search report
- ☐ the declaration under Rule 45 EPC
- ☐ the partial European search report under Rule 45 EPC
- ☐ the supplementary European search report concerning the international application under Article 157(2) EPC relating to the above-mentioned European patent application. Copies of the documents cited in the search report are enclosed.

The following specifications given by the applicant have been approved by the Search Division :

- ☒ Abstract
- ☒ Title
- ☒ Figure
- ☐ The abstract was modified by the Search Division and the definitive text is attached to this communication
- ☐ The following figure will be published with the abstract, since the Search Division considers that it better characterises the invention than the one indicated by the applicant.

Figure:

- ☒ Additional copy(copies) of the documents cited in the European search report.
(01)

REFUND OF THE SEARCH FEE

If applicable under Article 10 Rules relating to fees, a separate communication from the Receiving Section on the refund of the search fee will be sent later



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European Patent
Office

Application Number

EP 03 00 1370

CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



European Patent
Office

**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number

EP 03 00 1370

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. Claims: 1-15, 28-32

Splice connector with anti-reverse clip

2. Claims: 16-24

Splice connector with interlocking device of the wedges

3. Claims: 25-27

Splice connector having a body with special grooves



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 00 1370

| DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Category | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages | Relevant to claim | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7) |
| X | GB 858 703 A (CHARLES DUNCAN HENRY WEBB) 11 January 1961 (1961-01-11) * column 3, line 1 - line 40 * * figures 1,2 * | 1 | H01R4/50 |
| Y | | 12,13,19 | |
| A | | 2-11,14, 15,17, 20-24, 26-32 | |
| D,X | US 3 205 300 A (BECKER STEPHEN P) 7 September 1965 (1965-09-07) * column 2, line 55 - line 72 * * figures 1,4,12 * | 16 | |
| Y | | 12,13,19 | |
| A | | 17,18, 20-25,30 | |
| A | US 4 863 403 A (SHANNON SUEL G) 5 September 1989 (1989-09-05) * abstract * * figures 1-5 * | 1-15, 28-32 | TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) |
| A | US 6 068 525 A (DE KEYSER MARCEL L) 30 May 2000 (2000-05-30) * figure 2 * | 1-15, 28-32 | H01R |
| A | US 4 451 104 A (HODGSON STEN E ET AL) 29 May 1984 (1984-05-29) * abstract; figures 1-3 * | 1-15, 28-32 | |
| A | US 1 657 970 A (ERCOLE POLITI) 31 January 1928 (1928-01-31) * figures 1-5 * | 1-32 | |

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

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|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Place of search MUNICH | Date of completion of the search 24 June 2003 | Examiner Chelbosu, L |
| <p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p> | | |



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 00 1370

| DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Category | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages | Relevant to claim | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7) |
| A | US 4 629 274 A (POLLOCK HENRY J) 16 December 1986 (1986-12-16) * abstract * * figures 1-5 * ----- | 1-32 | |
| | | | TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) |
| | | | |
| The present search report has been drawn up for all claims | | | |
| Place of search MUNICH | | Date of completion of the search 24 June 2003 | Examiner Chelbosu, L |
| <p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p> | | | |

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EPO FORM 1503 D0 82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 03 00 1370

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

24-06-2003

| Patent document cited in search report | | Publication date | Patent family member(s) | Publication date |
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**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
CITATION FORM FOR
PATENT APPLICATION
(FORM PTO-1449)
(Substitute)**

Docket No.: 003B.0031.U1(US)

Serial No.: 10/068,178

Applicant(s): Mello et al.

Filing Date: 02/06/2000

Group: 2839

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

| Examiner Initials | Document Number (Number-Kind Code) | Publication Date (MM-DD-YYYY) | Name of Patentee or Applicant | Class | Sub-class |
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| | US-1657970 | 01-31-1928 | Ercole Politi | N/A | N/A |
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| Examiner Initials | Document Number (Country Code-Number-Kind Code) | Publication Date (MM-DD-YYYY) | Name Of Patentee of Applicant | Translation? Yes/No/n/a |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | GB-858703-A | 01-11-1961 | Charles Duncan Henry Webb | N/A |
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OTHER DOCUMENTS (Author (Capitalize), Title, Date, Pages, Etc., if known)

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Examiner's Signature:

Date Considered:

Initial if reference was considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP. Mark through citation if not considered.
Include a copy of this citation form with your next correspondence to the Applicant(s).